

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS USEGJC, TGEN
SUBJ: US-EGYPT JWGTRD MTG/GANLEY - ADDITIONAL MTGS WITH PM, MIN ED&MFA

1. SUMMARY: DURING JWGTRD MTG. FEB11-12, (REPORTED SEPTTEL), DEP.ASST SEC GANLEY (OES) US CO-CHAIRMAN HELD INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH MFA OFFICIALS AND MET BRIEFLY WITH PRIME MINISTER MAMDOUH SALEM, AND MIN ED & SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH MUSTAFA HILMY ON RANGE OF MUTUAL S&T INTERESTS. END SUMMARY.

2. GANLEY AND SCIATT DISCUSSED S&T PROJECT COOPERATION WITH AMB. MAHMOUD KASSEM, HEAD, DEPT. OF INT'L COOP. FOR TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT (MFA) AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF FEB.11 DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO SFCP PROJECTS. DISCUSSIONS WERE GENERAL IN NATURE.MFA DID NOT RAISE ANY SPECIFIC PROBLEMS; HOWEVER SEVERAL QUESTIONS WERE ASKED ABOUT OVERALL SIZE OF SFCP PROGRAM, CRITERIA FOR PROJECT SELECTION AND SPECIFICALLY DISBURSEMENT TOTAL FOR FY77. MFA IS SLOWLY, DEVELOPING ITS INTEREST IN PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND CRITERIA USED FOR FUNDING. HERETOFORE THEY HAD BEEN MOSTLY CONCERNED WITH ALLEGED "ABUSES", MOSTLY FISCAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE, NOW ATTENTION SEEMS TO BE TURNING TO WAYS IN WHICH MONEY IS BEING SPENT. ROLE OF JWGTRD IN AREA PRIORITY SELECTION WAS NOTED BY US.

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3. FYI: JWG ACTIVITIES AS SUCH FALL UNDER MFA AGREEMENTS OFFICE, AND THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME BUREAUCRATIC DIVERGENCE WITHIN MFA OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECTS COMING THROUGH JWG MECHANISM. MFA REP IN JWGTRD & JWGEC, AGREEMENT OFFICE HEAD MOHAMED EL AZAZI TOLD SCIATT DURING MTG. THAT ANY PROJECTS DEVELOPED BY JWG'S DID NOT NEED FURTHER MFA REVIEW SINCE MFA PARTICIPATED IN MTGS. END FYI.

4. MTG. WITH PRIME MINISTER SALEM WAS SUGGESTED AND ARRANGED BY MINISTER OF STATE NAIM ABU TALEB, AND WAS BRIEF COURTESY CALL-HOWEVER, DID STATE HIS RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT FOR S&T COOP. AS WELL AS DESIRE OF GOE THAT COOPERATION GO AS SMOOTHLY AND EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE. MTG. WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY CHARGE H.FREEMAN MATTHEWS, SCIATT, MIN OF ED & SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HILMY, MIN HEALTH BADRAN AND ABU TALEB. ALTHOUGH MTG. EVIDENCED GOE RECOGNITION OF S&T, ABU TALEB APPARENTLY ALSO WISHED TO USE OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS PM'S ATTENTION ON US/EGYPT COOPERATION TO LAY BASE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS HE AND DR. HASSAN ISMAIL ARE DEVELOPING ON "REGULARIZINGS" JWGTDR" RESPONSIBILITY AND RELATING TO OVERALL GOE S&T COORDINATION. ISMAIL HAD COMPLETED A DRAFT JUST PRIOR TO MTG.

5. MTG. WITH MIN ED & SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, ATTENDED BY DEP. MIN ABDEL GHANY AND SCIATT, WAS ALSO OF GENERAL NATURE; WITH MINISTER EXPRESSING BOTH HIS SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT COOPERATION AND HIS CONFIDENCE (PERHAPS OVERCONFIDENCE) IN THE ABILITY OF US S&T &"KNOW HOW" TO IMPROVE LIFE IN EGYPT.

6. COMMENT: TAKEN TOGETHER THESE MEETINGS GAVE THE FOLLOWING IMPRESSION: ALTHOUGH S&T RESPONSIBILITIES TAKE SECOND PLACE TO THE LARGER EDUCATION SECTOR, HILMY IS APPARENTLY TAKING ACTIVE, IF INDIRECT ROLE IN DEFINING THESE. DEP. MIN. ABDEL GHANY BRIDGES THE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE SECTORS IN THE MINISTRY ENCOMPASSING UNIVERSITIES AND THE ACADEMY. MIN OF STATE ABU TALEB, APPEARS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOST CONCERNED WITH "TROUBLE SHOOTING" INTERMINISTERIAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND SPECIFIC PROJECT AREAS. HE IS ALSO CONCERNED WITH BUREACRATIC REARRANGEMENTS, HAVING THE ADVANTAGE OF LACK OF ANY MINISTRY PARTISANSHIP. THE ACADEMY AS AN AGENCY SEEMS UNDISTURBED, HOWEVER, ITS PRESIDENT DR.ABU AL AZM APPEARS INCREASINGLY BUFFERED ON ALL SIDES IN AREAS OTHER THAN ACADEMY OPERATION.

7. MIN HEALTH BADRAN STILL PLAYS AN ACTIVE ROLE BECAUSE OF HIS EARLY INVOLVEMENT IN JWG'S AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS, HIS WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE RESOURCES AND HIS EXTRAORDINARY ENERGY. HOWEVER ABU TALEB SEEMS TO BE INTERESTED IN TAKING ON MORE OF THIS CATALYTIC FUNCTION AND BADRAN'S INVOLVEMENT MAY LESSEN OVER TIME. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT COURSE GOE WILL TAKE ON "REGULARIZING" COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS. THE PRIME MINISTER, WILL BE ASKED TO ISSUE AN APPROPRIATE DECREE.

8. MFA DEPT. OF INT'L COOP FOR DEVELOPMENT WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP A STRONGER HAND WITH GOE TECHNICAL MINISTRIES AND UNIVERSITIES IN PROJECT ACTIVITIES. THIS MFA OFFICE IS SUPPOSED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK IN WHICH FOREIGN "DONORS" WORK. ALTHOUGH IT CONCEDES SFCP RESEARCH IS NOT "DONOR" TECHNICAL

ASSISTANCE, IT IS SEEN AS CONTRIBUTING TO EGYPT'S CAPABILITIES &
SKILLS, HENCE AS DEVELOPMENT.EILTS

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